

Tasting Notes



<i>The Appearance</i>	<i>The Appearance</i>
	<p>When you pour the wine into your glass, the first thing you do is look at it. How does it look? Is it clear or dull and cloudy? Take a look at the colour too. Ruby red or turning brown? Crystal clear or yellowy? Finally, swirl the wine in the glass and look at the legs - the droplets of wine running down the glass. Are they thick and oily (indicating high alcohol) or thin and watery?</p>
<i>The Nose / Aroma / Bouquet</i>	<i>The Nose / Aroma / Bouquet</i>
	<p>Swirl the wine again, and this time stick your nose in the glass and take a good sniff. What do you smell? Close your eyes. Does it smell fruity? Citrusy? Musty? Young wines tend to be quite simple, whereas older wines often develop a more complex aroma with different layers. You can check out our list of grape varieties for the aromas and flavours commonly associated with various types of grape.</p>
<i>The Flavour</i>	<i>The Flavour</i>
	<p>Now comes the fun bit: take a sip of the wine. Make it a decent sip though, not a tiny little sip like you're afraid it might be hot, but not a big mouthful like you're dying of thirst either. You can try sucking in some air with it too: that helps aerate the wine to bring out the flavours (although it's better to do that when it's obvious you're tasting the wine rather than at a social occasion - making a noise like bathwater going down the drain at your best friend's wedding reception is unlikely to go down too well).</p> <p>How does the wine feel in your mouth? Thick and syrupy? Velvety and smooth? Is it warming? Or does it have a crisp bite? Does it make your mouth water? That could be a sign of citrus flavours or high alcohol. Does it make your lips pucker? That's usually a sign of high tannin levels.</p> <p>Now you have a decision to make - spit or swallow? This is purely down to personal preference of course, but we advise swallowing in restaurants and at social gatherings. And when you do, think about the aftertaste. Does it linger? How long? Is it pleasant?</p>
<i>Overall Assessment</i>	<i>Overall Assessment</i>
	<p>So you've broken the wine down into Appearance, Nose and Flavour. What did you think of it as a whole? Did you like it? Was it exciting or dull? Was it unusual or was it pretty uninspiring? And was it good value? Would you buy it again? You might also want to mention what you would eat with it : would it go well with chicken or fish or would it be better paired with something heavier like a rich stew or a spicy curry?</p>
<i>Short Summary of Your Review for Search Results</i>	<i>Short Summary of Your Review for Search Results</i>
	<p>Now summarise your review in just 160 characters (20-25 words): think about how you would summarise your review to send in a single SMS text message! We will use this summary wherever search results or other lists of reviews are displayed.</p>

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Rate This Wine

There are lots of systems for rating wines systematically and methodically, but these for most people these are too complicated to do ourselves. So we have simplified it to these eight categories, which on the 100-point scale equates to approximately the values given first.

- 98-100 – Absolutely Unbelievable** :: Fantastic, overwhelming, life-changingly, heart-stoppingly good wine, better than your first kiss and coming a very close second to the birth of your children. The memory of a wine this good is enough to make the hair stand up on the back of your neck and a gentle shiver run down your spine.
- 95-97 – Superb** :: These wines are massive! They blow you away with their balance, their elegance and the length of their finish which seems to last forever. These are the sort of wines you boast about to your friends to watch them turn green with envy.
- 90-94 – Excellent** :: Complex and intriguing enough to impress your friends and to show them you know what good wine is. These wines won't rock your world like a SUPERB wine would, but they will be well-balanced and will certainly leave you wanting more.
- 85-89 – Very Good** :: These are high-quality, better-than-average wines, very drinkable and quite satisfactory for everyday drinking, but you won't find the same depth or complexity as you would in an EXCELLENT wine.
- 80-84 – Average** :: This is the sort of wine which is fine as an occasional glugger to quench your thirst, but not the sort of thing you would want to drink regularly. A non-challenging, one-dimensional wine with little character, poor balance and a weak finish.
- 70-79 – Below Average** :: You wouldn't buy this one again, even if it was on a buy-one-get-TWO-free special offer. This is the sort of wine you remember so that you can avoid it in future, not so that you can recommend it to friends.
- 60-69 – Undrinkable** :: Under no circumstances let this stuff get anywhere near your mouth, and if you get a splash in your eye, seek immediate medical assistance. Don't even pour it down the drain: sure, it will scour the pipes for you, but it will probably kill off all the fish when it reaches the ocean.
- 50-59 – UGGGHHHHH!** :: Imagine a combination of industrial-strength cleaning fluid and battery acid...

And that's it ~ you're a wine reviewer!

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